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Idaho State Department of Education
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DEPARTMENT SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND WAIVER

BOISE –The Idaho State Department of Education is seeking comments from the public as it works to apply for a waiver under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

The waiver application is different from reauthorization. Currently, the U.S. Senate is considering legislation that would reauthorize No Child Left Behind. Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna has strongly encouraged Congress and the Administration to take action and reauthorize No Child Left Behind, since it is four years overdue. He testified earlier this week before the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee in support of the proposed legislation. (See <http://educationidaho.blogspot.com/> for more information on Superintendent Luna's testimony.)

However, until the federal law is reauthorized with necessary changes, Idaho is moving forward in applying for a waiver to ensure the state can create its own system of increased accountability and flexibility for all schools and districts.

With a waiver, Idaho will create a new system of increased accountability that focuses on academic growth and college and career readiness. Idaho is well positioned to apply for a waiver because the state passed the Students Come First education reform laws, which raised academic standards, implemented statewide pay-for-performance to reward teachers, and tied a portion of educator performance evaluations to student achievement.

Superintendent Luna and staff from the State Department of Education already have reached out to the leaders of educational stakeholder groups about the waiver application. Now, the public has an opportunity to comment on what Idaho's new accountability system should look like. Parents, teachers, school administrators, students, taxpayers, business representatives, and others are strongly encouraged to comment.

To submit your comments, please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/forms/ESEA_Flexibility.asp. Learn more about the waiver process before commenting online at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/assessment/FederalReq/>.

The Idaho State Department of Education will submit its waiver application to the U.S. Department of Education in February 2012.

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